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REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE SIXTH CONFERENCE

Report on the standardization of geographical names, its status and progress, 1992-1997

Paper submitted by Poland**

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** Prepared by Izabella Krauze-Tomczyk, Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography, and Jerzy Kondracki, Warsaw University.

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The following organizational changes occurred in the field of standardization of geographical names:

- The Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects, affiliated to the Council of Ministers Office was re-organized and moved to the Ministry of the Interior and Administration.
- The Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography was re-activated on January 1st, 1997; the Office is to supervise all activities related to onomastics, including the Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland.

Geographical names are being collected by topographers in the course of field surveys for maps at the scale 1:10 000. A short gazetteer was published in 1991. It comprised about 30 000 geographical names existing on 1:500 000 maps. In Poland it is obligatory to use geographical names in the national language. The Polish Toponymic Guidelines were published in English in 1993 (item 5).

Data Base of Geographical Names, shown on 1:10 000 maps, is being assembled at the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography (item 6).

Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland prepared about 6000 Polish exonyms. The list of these exonyms was published in four parts by the State Geodetic and Cartographic Service (item !0). The Commission prepared also a new List of Names of Countries of the World (item 16).

So far, no official organ in Poland is responsible for matters related to the standardization of geographical names. However, as previously reported for the years 1987 - 1992, there are two commissions, which deal with establishing geographical names: Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects within Poland and Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland dealing with world onomastics.

In 1997, due to the re-organization of central state administration, the Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects, affiliated to the Council of Ministers Office, was allocated to the Ministry of the Interior and Administration (Instruction No 26, of May 15, 1997). The Commission consists of 16 members - linguists, geographers, cartographers and representatives of the Polish

Academy of Sciences, Topographic Service of the Polish Army, Central Statistical Office. The Commission issues opinions concerning establishing, confirming or altering the spelling of names of localities and physiographic objects, opinions regarding setting-up and changing of the classification of physiographic objects and regarding the correctness of spelling and pronunciation of names of localities and physiographic objects used in publications.

The Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland* is still affiliated to the Ministry of National Education and is composed of the members appointed on October 11, 1987. Since the re-activation of the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography January 1, 1997, the intention is to move the Commission to that Office in 1998, to appoint new members and to organize, within the Office, a special section coordinating all matters related to geographical names.

In the years 1992-1997, the activities of the Commission for Establishing Names of Localities and Physiographic Objects were concentrated on verifying and changing names of localities for the Official List of Names of Localities of the Republic of Poland (first three volumes, published in 1980 - 1982, contain about 100 000 names). During the reporting period the Commission held 18 meetings. The approved names were published in *Monitor Polski*, the Official Journal of the Republic of Poland (*No 79* - Instruction of December 11, 1996, on establishing and changing names of some localities). These changes relate to 683 names. According to Polish regulations, a proposal to change a name of a locality may be submitted by inhabitants of this locality. Such a proposal has to be supported by at least half of the inhabitants with voting rights.. Next the proposal has to be endorsed by the chief administrator of the region and by voivode. The Commission considers the proposal into only after its submission by voivode. Historical data, conformity with linguistic standards, national and religious factors are taken into account. Following the acceptance by the Commission, the proposal concerning change of the name is approved by the Head of the Office of Council of Ministers (since 1997 by the Minister of the Interior and Administration); the decision becomes effective after its publication in the *Monitor Polski*.

The Commission for Standardization of Geographical Names Outside Poland held 11 meetings during the reporting period; it prepared about 6000 Polish exonyms with special emphasis on the neighbouring territories populated with large Polish minorities. A new, updated List of Names of Countries of the World was published in 1997; it comprises full and abbreviated names in local language , full and abbreviated Polish versions, names of capitals and derived attributes.

The State Geodetic and Cartographic Service published the results of the Commission's work under the title: " Polish Geographical Names of the World" in four parts:

Part I - Europe (excluding Eastern Europe), 1994, 91 pages;
Part II - Eastern Europe and Asia, 1996, 243 pages;
Part III - Africa, North America, South America, Australia and Oceania, Antarctica, 1994, 118 pages;
Part IV - Oceans and seas, 1994, 22 pages.

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In 1993, work entitled: "The Polish Toponymic Guidelines" was published in English (28 pages). Both publications were presented in Geneva in 1996 during the 18th Session of the Group of the UN Experts (UNGEGN).

Work on the standardization of geographical names has also been done within the State Geodetic and Cartographic Service and (since 1997) by the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography. The Head Office has initiated and is contributing to the financing of several projects resulting from UN recommendations on standardization of geographical names. In particular, the Office commissioned the establishing of the Database of Geographical Names within its Main Centre of Geodetic and Cartographic Documentation. The work started in 1995; the database will be made available to all users who may need updated information on geographical names. Verified names will be used for preparing the detailed gazetteer for Poland. The shortened version of the gazetteer: "Geographical Names of the Republic of Poland", comprising about 30 000 names of localities and physiographic objects, issued in 1991 by the State Geodetic and Cartographic Service, was presented in 1992 at the 6th UN Conference on Standardization of Geographical Names and was positively evaluated.

Polish experts participated in the meetings of the UN Regional Sections for Central-Eastern Europe and for South-Eastern Europe, held in 1993, 1996 and 1997 in Budapest - 3 persons in each meeting. Two experts took part in the 18th UNGEGN Session in Geneva. Moreover, Polish observers participated in the meeting of the UN Regional Section for Eastern Europe, Central and South Asia in Moscow in 1996 and in the meeting of the UN Regional Baltic Section. One person attended toponymic course in Riga in 1997. Reports from all these meetings, as well as from the 6th and 7th UN Conference were published in the "Polish Cartographic Review".

In May 1993, the State Geodetic and Cartographic Service, together with Cartographic Section of the Committee of Geodesy of the Polish Academy of Sciences, organized a seminar under the heading "Collection of local names for land information system". The urgent need for instructions concerning collection of geographical names in the form of toponymic guidelines was expressed in the course of this seminar. Such guidelines would also be helpful to topographers, who update topographic maps.

In order to popularize the UN idea of standardization of geographical names, a seminar on this topic was held in March 1997 at the Cartography Department of the Warsaw University.

A special session: "Database of geographical names as an element of editing topographic maps" was held during the Cartography School, organized by Cartographic Commission of the Polish Geographic Society in 1994.

Setting-up of a special section at the Head Office of Geodesy and Cartography coordinating all matters related to geographical names is planned for 1998.

We plan to speed up works on setting-up Database of Geographical Names based on topographic 1:10 000 maps, for gazetteer purposes. In 1998, we are planning to begin work on a new issue of the "Polish Geographical Names of the World" with supplement, which will include a list of Polish historical exonyms.